A SERMON

Wherein is shewed that the Church of God *is sometimes a Subject of*

GREAT PERSECUTION;

Preached on a Publick

FAST

At *Boston* in *New England*:

Occasioned by the Tidings of a great *Persecution* Raised against the *PROTESTANTS* in *FRANCE*.

By *INCREASE MATHER*, Teacher to a Church of Christ.

Psal. 122. 6, 8. *Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem, for my Brethren and Companions sakes I will now say, peace be within thee.*
Jer. 51. 50. *Ye that have escaped the sword, stand not still: Remember the Lord afar off: Let Jerusalem come into your mind.*

Sanguis Martyrum, semen Ecclesiæ,
Persecutio est pignus futuræ felicitatis.
Sanguine fundata est Ecclesia, sanguine crevit,
Sanguine succrevit: Sanguine Finis erit.

BOSTON IN NEW-ENGLAND:
Printed for *Samuel Sewall*, in the Year, 1682.

To the READER.

THat there will a Time come, when the Church of God upon Earth shall enjoy gloriose Prosperity and Dominions, is a great, and a Scripture-Truth. The greatness of the Kingdome (*not in, but*) under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High. Dan. 7. 27. *There shall be no more a pricking Briar, or a grieving Thorn to the Hous of Israel, of all that are round about them.* Ezek. 28. 24. *The Man of the Earth shall no more oppress.* Psal. 10. 18. *It is not said that we* do, *but that we* shall *reign on Earth.* Rev. 5. 10. *But to expect this before the creation of the New world (that New Heaven and New Earth, wherein Righteousness shall dwell) so much celebrated by the Holy Prophets and Apostles & in the Book of Revelation; seems to be unscriptural, & Irrational. It concerns us in this Age, not to dream of an Earthly Kingdome (as the Disciples sometimes did, & we are too apt to do.) but rather to think of going by the Cross unto the Crown; as we see others are doing before us.*

See Dr. C-win's S- on Rev. 5

That the Protestant Cause (*and consequently the* Church of God *in this world*) *is now in a more hazardous State, than hath been known, for above these Hundred years; is a Truth, that cannot but affect those who have their thoughts Exercised in Discerning things of this nature. When matters are reduced to the lowest ebb, they shall revert again. Nor shall the* Churches Persecutors, *be any more able to prevent it, than they are able to make the Sea stand still; or to change the Ordinances of Heaven. In the mean time, the Lord knoweth how to preserve His little Flock, in the midst of millions of Wolves, and Tigers, that seek to devour it.*

The Spouse of Christ, is now in the Lions Dens, and in the mountains of the Leopards: *He knows how to preserve it there and how to bring it out from thence.* Cant. 4. 8. *It was a*

great Sight, and well might Moſes *wonder at it, when* the Buſh burned with fire, but was not conſumed. *The Church of God at this Day, is that Buſh; which is threatened with the Fire of Perſecution; and ſome part of it begins to burn: But we have this to comfort us, We know it ſhall never be conſumed. God hath wonderful wayes to ſave His ſervants, when the greateſt Dangers do attend them. He maketh the Earth to help the woman. The* Philiſtines *muſt invade the Land, that ſo* David *might not be ſwallowed up by* Saul. Senacherib *muſt hear a Rumor that the* Ethiopians *are preparing war againſt him, that ſo his deſign againſt* Jeruſalem *may be diverted. Notable is that paſſage which* Scultetus *relates, that when the K. of* France *was become a priſoner to the Emperour of* Germany (Charles *the 5th.*) *He was ſet at liberty upon Condition that he would do his utmoſt to root* Proteſtantiſm *out of his Dominions. But ſoon after, they fell at variance again (the Pope blowing the bellows of contention) by which means, the Church in that part of the world, eſcaped the fury of thoſe oppreſſors. Memorable alſo is it, That about the cloſe of the* Tridentine *Council (or rather Conſpiracy) there was a conſultation in* Italy, *by the Pope & his Cardinals, for an utter extirpation of the Reformed Churches throughout* Europe. *Every Prince in* Europe *had a certain part deſigned, where this project ſhould be put in practice. But the death of that Pope* (Pius V.) *hindred the proſecution of the Deſign until the Time of* Clement VIII. *when it was revived, and the bloody Reſolution confirmed, by him, & his Cardinals, under their Hands, & Seals. A Kinſman to Cardinal* Baronius, *was choſen to carry thoſe bloody Letters to the Princes aforeſaid: but whilſt he was in his Journey, the Lord awakened his conſcience that he retired into an obſcure Village, and there ſpent three Days in Faſting, & Prayer to God: After which, in ſtead of going into* Spain *with the Popes bloody Commiſſions for the Deſtruction of the Proteſtants, He went into* France, *and there diſcloſed the whole Deſign to Mr.* Figureus, *an eminent Proteſtant Miniſter, and in ſtead of ſhedding the Innocent blood of the Proteſtant Churches, he himſelf became a famous Proteſtant: by which mea-*

fulfilling of Scriptures. P. 81.

the designed mischief was diverted. This was not altogether unlike Pauls *Conversion; after which the Churches had rest, & were edified. The like is to be said of* Vergerius, (*the Popes Legate*) *who designing to write a Book against the Protestant Religion, was, by reading those Books which he intended to refute, Converted, to the acknowledgement of the Truth; so that of a persecuting Papist, He became a* preaching *Protestant. And there comes to mind, a very remarkable providence, which Dr.* Fuller *somewhere relates; viz.* That about the Third of the Reign of Queen *Mary*, a Pursevant was sent with a Commission into *Ireland*, to impower some eminent persons to proceed with Fire, and Fagot against the poor Protestants. And it happened by Divine providence, this Pursevant, at *Chester*, lodged in the House of a protestant Inn-keeper, who having gotten some inkling of the matter, secretly stole his Commission out of his Cloakbag; & put a Card (the *Knave of Clubs* in the room thereof. Some weeks after, he appeared before the Lords of the privy Council at *Dublin* (of whom Bp. *Coren* a principal) and produced a Card for his pretended Commission. They caused him to be committed to Prison for such an affront, as if done on design, to deride them. Here he lay for some Moneths; till with much ado, at last he got his enlargement. Then over he returned for *England*, and quickly getting his Commission renewed, makes with all speed for *Ireland* again. But before his Arrival there, he was prevented with the Newes of Queen *Maryes* death: and so the Lives of many, & the Liberties of more, poor servants of God, were preserved.

Dr. Engl thye mer & M Prof vide

As for our parts, whom the Lord hath made to dwell alone in this wilderness, when we hear of the afflictions of the Churches of Christ, though at a remote distance from us; There are two things which God doth certainly expect from us: 1. *That we should Sympathise with them in all their sorrows. Christ himself doth so* Isa. 63. 9. *and so shall we, if the Spirit of Christ be in us. It is Recorded concerning the excellent* Calvin, *that he was more affected with the miseries of the Church, than with any of his own*

Re in &

concerns. So was the great Melanchon. *When* Luther *reproved him for his sollicitude about the* protestant Interest (*which in those Dayes also was in eminent Danger*) *he mildly replyed* Si non *Curarem* non *Orarem*. If I should have no *Care* in my Heart concerning that matter, I should not *Pray* about it, so much as I do. 2. *The Lord expects that we should also prepare our selves to drink of the same cup. Are there not with us, even with us also, sins against the Lord our God, which may deserve it? The Lord planted us a Noble Vine, wholly a Right Seed. Well it were, if it could be said, we are in no respect degenerate. And did ever degenerate Churches continue long without smarting under the Rod of Persecution? It is a weighty word, which a great Worthy of our own hath, in a Book lately published.* "*There hath been* (saith He) *no Nation in the World, which publickly received the Christian Religion, but it hath been wasted, & destroyed by the sword of Pagan Idolaters, or such as are no better than they* —— *And I pray God, that the like Fate doth not at this Day hang over the Reformed Nations, as from their profession they are called.*

If it should go ill with the Reformed Nations, we have little Reason to promise our selves nothing but Halcyon Dayes. Security will be like to hasten, but a serious Preparation for it, may be a means to prevent, *misery, from coming upon us. So may we hope that God will continue to be gracious unto this Remnant of* Joseph; *And the Lord grant that the good will, & Blessing of Him that dwelt in the Bush, may still be upon this His People, who are separated from their Brethren.*

Boston; N. Engl.
1. M. 28. D. 1682. INCREASE MATHER.

ACTS, VIII. 1.

At that Time there was a Great Perſecution againſt the Church which was at Jeruſalem, &c.

THe Evangeliſt having in the preceding Chapter ſett forth the Hiſtory of *Stephens* Martyrdome, proceeds in this Chapter to relate what things were *contemporary* therewith, and *conſequent* thereupon. In this Verſe there are Three things mentioned as Remarkeable Events which happened either at, or immediately after *Stephens* Death.

1. *Sauls* Conſenting thereunto: So the Verſe begins. *And* Saul *was conſenting unto his Death.* Gr. ἦν συνευδοκῶν, It pleaſed him well. The expreſſion intimates that others liked it; and that He liked it alſo. He did indeed manifeſt his Approbation of it, both by Words, & Actions. And this is here mentioned as a thing very Obſerveable; that the Grace of God in Converting *that Saul*; in cauſing a *perſecuting Saul*, to become a *preaching Paul*, (of which in the next Chapter there is a large Account) might be rendred the more glorioſe, and illuſtrious.

2. *A great Perſecution* againſt Chriſtians. The chief Perſecutors had for ſome Time been reſtrained from doing what they had a mind unto, doubtleſs for Fear of the multitude: but when they ſaw the people patiently bear with *Stephens* Death, they were encouraged to go on in that way of Violence, and Perſecution.

3. A Diſperſion of the perſecuted Chriſtians at *Jeruſalem* into other places. That's the laſt clauſe of the *Verſe*

They were All *scattered abroad thorowout the Regions of* Judæa & Samaria, *except the Apostles*: which words Intimate a General Dispersion. ALL does not imply that all, and every Christian in *Jerusalem* did leave the City: but that very many did so; and that all the Preachers of the Gospel, (upon whom persecution is wont to light most heavy) except the Apostles, did remove. Therefore it is said in *v.* 4. *They that were scattered abroad, went every where preaching the word.*

It is the second of these particulars which falls under our present Consideration; *viz.* The Persecution which happened at the Time of *Stephens* Death, which in the words before us, is described,

1. From the *Subject* of it; *viz. The Church at* Jerusalem; which was then the only Christian Church in the World; the Gentiles not having as yet received the Gospel: So that *the whole Interest of Religion*, or *Christianity*, was here Strook at, & endangered.

2. From the *Greatness* of it; *There was a GREAT Persecution against the Church.* It was so in respect of the *Kind* of persecution, which the Enemies of the Church were now come unto. Before this, they had persecuted onely with Words, and Threats: but now they proceeded to bloody Blows, Banishment, & Death. And it was so, in respect of the *Number* of them that Suffered. *Dorotheus* writes, that at the Time of this persecution, there were Two Thousand Christians that lost their Lives. And it is evident from the Scripture, that there were many (thò the particular Number be not expressed) that then suffered Imprisonment, Death, or Banishment. Compare *Acts*, 26. 10, 11. where *Paul* confesseth; *Many* of the saints at *Jerusalem* did I shut up in prison; and when they were put to Death, I gave my voice against them; and I punished them oft, in every Synagogue. So that it might well be called a great persecution.

The Doctrine from hence is,

Doct. *That the Church of God in this World, is sometimes a Subject of GREAT PERSECUTION.*

Three things should be spoken to, for the clearing of this Truth.

1. *When* men may be said to be perscuted.

2. What *Kind* of persecution the Church of God in this world may be subject to.

3. The *Reasons*, whence it comes to pass that the Lords people in this world are sometimes persecuted.

Q. 1. *when may a man be said to be persecuted?*

Ans. This is, *When a Christian doth suffer in the cause of Christ.* There are three things necessarily implyed, in order to Mens being among the Number of the Lords persecuted ones.

1. *They must be exposed unto Sufferings. Persecuted* ones are *passive* ones. They suffer some Evil or other from the world. The *Greek* word (διωγμός) properly signifieth a Following of another: And it is sometimes used in a good sence: Thus, 1 *Thes.* 5. 15. *Follow* that which is good. and Thus, *Heb.* 12. 14. *Follow* peace, & holiness. But usually, the word is taken in an evil sence: even *To follow another to do him Hurt.* When a man does pursue another with a resolved mind never to cease, until he hath obtained his evil desire on him. Here is the persecutór, & the persecutéd. In such a way did *Saul*, & those with him, follow *David*; and therefore does he say, *Ps.* 119. 157. *Many are my Persecutors, & my enemies.* & *Ps.* 142. 6. *Deliver me from my Persecutors: for they are stronger than I.*

2. They must suffer *in a good Cause.* A man may sûffer, & yet, not be pèrsecuted; if the Cause that he suffers for, be not a Good, but an Evil Cause. Several persons may be exposed to the same sufferings, at the same time; and yet the one be persecuted, and the other not so; according to the Cause which they suffer in, or for. We know that in *Smithfield*, six persons were put to death on the same day: three of them being *Protestant Martyrs*, and the other three, miserable Papists. When our blessed Lord Jesus Christ was crucified, others were at the same time crucified also: They received but the due Reward of their Deeds, so did the penitent Theef

Non Pœn[illegible] Causa [illegible] Martyrem Cyprian.

Fox's *A[illegible] Monum.* [illegible] P. 429. Fuller [illegible] Cent. 1[illegible] 5. P. 2[illegible]

acknowledge, *Luc.* 23. 41. *We ſuffer juſtly, for we receive the due Reward of our Deeds:* when Jeſus Chriſt (as tis added) *had done nothing amiſs:* but was expoſed to His ſufferings for the ſake of the Truth: becauſe He did bear witneſs to the moſt glorioſe Truth that can be mentioned: becauſe He ſaid, *He was the Son of God, & the King of* Iſrael.

If men ſuffer for evil Deeds, they are not perſecuted. The Apoſtle ſaies *Gal.* 5. 12. *I would they were even cut off that Trouble you.* They are not perſecuted, who are expoſed to Trouble, for unjuſtly cauſing Trouble to the Churches of Chriſt. When *Achan* had troubled *Iſrael,* and God by bringing him forth to condign puniſhment, troubled him; that was no perſecution. And if men ſuffer for an evil Opinion (as well as an evil Practice) they are not the Lords perſecuted ones. If the Churches in *Aſia* had Cenſured thoſe that held the doctrine of the *Nicolaitans,* they had pleaſed the Lord Chriſt; who would not have looked upon the *Nicolaitans* as a perſecuted People. When *Jehu* put all the worſhippers of *Baal* to death, and when that godly Prince *Joſiah,* in an holy zeal cauſed the Prieſts of the High places to be ſlain; (2 *Ki.* 23. 20.) they were not Martyrs; none of them were ſo. There are indeed ſome erroneous Opinions, which if any be expoſed unto cruel ſufferings from men for them, they that afflict them are not to be juſtified. Nevertheleſs, ſuch ſufferers are not Martyrs. Others do ill ſo to puniſh them: & they do ill in maintaining an Errour. Of ſo great Concernment is it, for men to have their Conſciences rightly informed by the word of God, when they embarque themſelves on the ſuffering ſide. Nay more, a *godly* man may ſuffer from men, and yet not be perſecuted in the Notion which my Text refers unto; *h. e.* if he ſuffer in a cauſe not juſtifiable by the word of God. Hence the Apoſtle *Peter,* gives ſuch a caution as that 1 *Pet.* 4. 15, 16. *Let none of you ſuffer as an Evil-doer; yet if any man ſuffer as a Chriſtian, let him not be aſhamed.* A Chriſtian may ſuffer, and yet not ſuffer *as a Chriſtian.* A godly man

may fall into sin, yea, into scandalous Errors and Transgressions, and be justly punished on account thereof. To suffer Persecution, is to suffer in the cause of Christ. When *for Gods sake*, a man does suffer from the world. According to what the Church saies, *Ps.* 44. 22. *For Thy sake we are killed all the day long: we are counted as sheep for the slaughter.* Or, for *Righteousness sake.* Thus *Mat.* 5. 10. Blessed are they which are *persecuted for Righteousness sake.* Or for the *Gospels sake* Mar 10. 29. Or, for *Christ's sake* 1 Cor. 12. 10. Upon which account, Martyrs are called the *Martyrs of Jesus*, Rev. 17. 6. A man suffers in the cause of God, & so is persecuted, when he suffers for his godliness. As 1 *Joh.* 3. 12. *Cain slew Abel his brother, because his works were Righteous.* Or, for bearing witness to any Truth contained in the word of God. As in *Rev.* 1. 9. & 6. 9. & 20. 4. We read of them that were *slain for the word of God.* Hence one of the Martyrs when he came to die, held his Bible in his hand, before the people, saying, *Behold! Here is that which has brought me hither.* In such a case, Suffering is a blessed Testimony. Or, for opposing, & testifying against any thing that is condemned in the word of God. He is *persecuted*, that suffers for opposing any corrupt Opinion in matters of Faith, or Worship: which was the case of *Daniel*, & the three Worthyes, and of the Christians in the Primitive Times: and in these latter Ages also, the Churches of God have been subject unto horrible slaughters for opposing Antichristian Superstitious Doctrines, especially, when the Lords faithful witnesses began boldly to declare against the Pope, & Church of *Rome*, they were exposed unto great & grievous persecution, on that account, as the Scripture foretold it should come to pass. *Rev.* 14. 9, 13. He also is persecuted, that suffers for bearing witness against any sinful Practice. If a man set himself against the sins of the Times, for that his Life and Blood may be taken from him, *Heb.* 12. 4. & Then is he persecuted, Then is he a Martyr. Such an one was *Zechariah* the son of *Jehoiadah*, who was sto

ned to death for his faithful Testimony against sin, 2 *Chron.* 24. 20, 21. And *John Baptist*, who was beheaded for bearing witness against the Uncleanness which some great persons in those Dayes Lived in, *Mat.* 14. 3.

But, 3. (one thing more) *They must suffer from a Right Principle*, h. e. from a principle of Faith, and true obedience to the will of God: a principle of Love to God; of Fear of His great Name; of Conscience to His will; and that they may keep their Consciences pure in His sight. *If a man for Conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully*, 1 Pet. 2. 19. If Conscience toward God; Respect, and obedience to His will, carry a man out in suffering, then is he persecuted. Indeed, there are, in a more strict and Scripture-sence, *No Persecuted ones, but such as have the fear of God in their hearts*: Hence such are pronounced *Blessed*, Mat. 5. 10. and called Saints, *Rev.* 17. 6. and 13. 6. which does imply their being in a state of grace. It is possible a man may suffer unto the loss not only of Liberty, but of Life it self; and that in a good cause also; and yet not be a true Member & Martyr of Jesus Christ: not having a true principle of Love to God in him, 1 *Cor* 13. 3. *Socrates*, an Heathen, suffered Death ('tis said) for maintaining that there is but one God; and the poor *Jews* have sometimes been exposed unto great sufferings, because they will not comply with Popish, or Mahometan Superstitions. *Arians*, and other Hereticks have sometimes lost their Lives in the common cause of Christianity, when Pagan enemies have prevailed over them: yea, so have some popish Idolaters done. There have been, that out of pride and vain glory, did suffer not a little. Ecclesiastical History speaketh of those that would Murder themselves, out of a vainglorious ambitious desire to be accounted Martyrs. But if men are acted, and carried out in sufferings from no better principles than those, the Lord will not own them for his persecuted ones.

Q. 2. *What Kind of persecution may the Church of God in*

this

this world, be subject to?

Ans. There is a threefold Persecution.

1. *There is the persecution of the Heart:* when men do secretly hate the Image of God in His servants; and therefore malign them, and wish evil to them: It is said, *Ps.* 129. 5. *Let them all be confounded, & turned back, that* Hate *Zion.* Here persecution begins: There is an Hatred of Zion, which is no better than persecution. *Joseph* was persecuted by his Brethren, when they Hated him for his godliness, *Gen.* 37. 2, 4. *Micajah* was persecuted by *Ahab*; when he said, *I Hate him*, 1 *K.* 22 8. And thus, the Lords people are alwayes the subjects of great persecution: being much hated in the world, because they cannot comply with the evil manners of it. *The world hateth you*, Joh. 15. 18, 19. And, *Ye shall be hated of all men for my Names sake*, Luc. 21. 17. Saies our Lord Jesus to His Disciples. & This Now is persecution, yea, bloody persecution in the sight of God: For, whosoever Hateth his Brother, is a Murderer, 1 *Joh.* 3. 15. If the Lord did not wonderfully restrain them, the wicked would serve the godly, as *Cain* did *Abel.* Inasmuch as they hate them, they would destroy them: For hatred doth not rest, but in the destruction of the thing hated.

2. *There is the Persecution of the Tongue:* when the Lords servants are Reproached, and Reviled, because of their Zeal for, and their Faithfulness unto God. We read that *Ishmael* mocked *Isaac*, Gen. 21. 9. Now *Paul* saies, *Gal.* 4. 29. *He that was born after the flesh, Persecuted him that was born after the spirit.* So then in such Mocking there is Persecution. Thus Christ saies, *Mat.* 5. 11. *Blessed are you, when men persecute you*: Persecute you! How? Tis added; *And Revile you; & shall say all manner of evil against you, falsely, for my sake.* When Reproaches are cast upon the servants of Christ, on the account of their Zeal for Christ; then do they suffer persecution. *Arians* of old, would call the great *Athanasius* by the Name of *Satanasius*; and Papists used to call their Dogs

Calvin; that so they might vilify that great Reformer. Names of Reproach are commonly given to the Lords servants: *Hugonots*, *Fanaticks*, and what not? And unto this kind of persecution, the Church of God is alwayes subject; more or less. It is said, 2 *Tim.* 3. 12. *All that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer Persecution.* Be sure, the persecution of the Heart; and the persecution of the Tongue, they shall suffer; however it may be with them, as to a further persecution. Therefore

3. *There is the Persecution of the Hand*; when Violence is offered to Christians, because they are Christians; when they are deprived of their civil Liberties, for professing the Faith of Christ: which was the case of those Christians my Text hath reference unto: and of the Church in *Smyrna*; concerning whom 'tis said, *Rev.* 2. 10. *The Devil shall cast some of you into prison.* Or, when their Estates are taken from them for that they are faithful to the Lords Cause; & Interest. As it was with the Christian *Jews*, who took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, *Heb.* 10. 34. Most of all, when they *Lose their Lives* for their bearing witness to the Truth. They who so suffer, are by way of Eminency called *Martyrs*, i. e. Witnesses: (*Rev.* 2. 13.) because this is the Highest witness-bearing that can be, when a Christian doth Seal the Truth he hath professed, with his Blood. Great persecutions of this sort, have sometimes (and many a time) been raised against the Church of God. Thus in the X. Primitive persecutions (under the Heathen Emperours) especially the last of them, the whole Church of God, and Interest of Christianity was persecuted. And after this, the *Arians*, who indeed called themselves Christians, did persecute the Orthodox as much as the Heathen had done before them. And last of all, *Antichrist* hath made it his Design to destroy those that have born witness for Christ; *It is given unto him to make war with the Saints.* And the Antichristan persecution must continue, more or less, for forty two moneths, *i. e.* for the space of

twelve

twelve hundred & ſixty years, *Dan.* 7. 21, 25. The Pope of *Rome* (ſucceſſively conſidered) is that Antichriſt, *Rev.* 13. 5, 7. Papiſts have been the moſt bloody perſecutors in the world; they have ſhed Rivers of blood. Among the *Albigenſes, & Waldenſes*, they murdered above a Million. In the laſt Century, within the ſpace of fourty years; *viz.* between *An.* 1540. & 1580 in *Europe*, they ſlew Nine Hundred Thouſand Proteſtants. About forty years ago, they ſlaughtered Three Hundred Thouſand Proteſtants in that one Kingdome of *Ireland*: and according to the computation which ſome have made, they have, ſince the ſetting up of the *Inquiſition*, ſhed the blood of more Proteſtants in *Europe*, than there are Papiſts at this day alive upon the face of the Earth.

V. Mede Apoc. 13. *Willet's Papiſm.* 1175.

V. Alſted *cyclop. in nol. C. Annum*

Q. 3. *Whence comes it to paſs that the Lords people in this world are thus perſecuted?*

Reaſ. 1. *Sin is the cauſe of it.* Be ſure, that ſin which is in the hearts of the perſecutors themſelves, even the Natural Enmity, which they have againſt godlineſs, and godly men, is the Reaſon of the perſecution cauſed by them. There is enmity in the ſeed of the ſerpent againſt the ſeed of the woman *Gen.* 3. 15. and from that enmity perſecution does ariſe. *Cain* (the firſt perſecutor) perſecuted *Abel* to death becauſe of this. Sore eyes cannot bear the light: Nor can guilty ſinners endure the light of Gods Image appearing in the ſpirits, and in the converſations of His Saints. Tigres (they ſay) are put in a Rage by a fragrant Smell brought near unto them: Truly, the fragrant graces of the Saints, put the Tigres of the world into a curſed Rage at them.

Yea, and many times the ſins which Gods people themſelves are ſubject to, are the procuring cauſe of great perſecution. By their own ſins they provoke the Lord to put a ſword into the Hands of their Enemies. The ſins found amongſt the Churches of Chriſt, do this. For indeed, their tranſgreſſions do moſt of all diſhonour, and diſpleaſe Him. If his Sons, and his Daughters provoke him, He will ſurely

ſcourge them in the open ſight of others. For three ſins eſpecially:

1 *Apoſtaſy.* When *Solomon* did forſake God, the Lord raiſed up theſe, and thoſe Adverſaryes againſt him, 1 *Kings*, 11. 9, 14. The *Babylonian* perſecution came on the *Jews* becauſe their backſlidings were increaſed. Therefore were they torn in pieces by Evening-wolves, by Lions, and by Leopards, *Jer.* 5. 6. And in the Dayes of the Judges, Enemies made havock of the *Iſraelites*, becauſe of their going a whoring from God. By their *Apoſtaſies*, they provoked the Lord, that He ſold them into the hands of their enemies round about, *Judg.* 2, 13, 41. When the Lord ſtrengthened the King of *Moab* againſt *Iſrael*, it was becauſe *Iſrael* had done evil in his ſight. So when the Lord left them to be oppreſſed, and ſcattered by the *Midianites*, *Philiſtines*, *Ammonites*; It was becauſe they had left God, in departing from his holy and righteous wayes. We need goe no further than our own Nation, for the confirmation of this. The *Saxons* (from whom we are generally Deſcended) became great Idolaters, ſerving graven Images, Canonizing Saints, and worſhipping them; in ſtead of God in Chriſt alone. For which cauſe, God puniſhed our foreſathers with the *Daniſh Perſecution*; and after that with the *Norman* Conqueſt.

2. *Sinful Diviſions* and contentions. If Gods people ſit looſe from him, or if they ſit looſe one from another, the Lord lets looſe perſecuting enemies upon them. When a ſhepherd ſees his ſheep ſcattered one from another, he ſets his Dogs to drive them together. Perſecutors are called *Dogs* in the ſcripture, *Pſ.* 22. 16. When the Lords people are ſcattering, and dividing, the Shepherd of *Iſrael* lets looſe thoſe Dogs upon them. That was the caſe of the Primitive Chriſtians: eſpecially with reference to *Aurelian's Perſecution* They were expoſed unto the Scorn of the Heathen, and that on public Theaters, for their Contentions; and then perſecution followed. If Chriſtians will not have peace with their

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Brethren; then they shall have war with their Enemies.

3. *Formality in Religion.* When professors are generally grown cold, and lifeless in Religion; God casts them into a fiery furnace of Persecution: that life, and heat might be brought into them again. Thus does the Lord Jesus say to the Church at *Sardis*, Rev. 3. Init. *Thou hast a Name to live, & art dead: Therefore I will come on thee as a Thief.* h. e. Suddenly. Storms of persecution arise suddenly for this. The truth is, Formalists in Religion, are many times the most bitter persecutors. Though Formalists may be professors of the same Religion with the sincere; (as *Cain & Abel* were of the same Religion; only *Cain* was a meer Formalist, when *Abel* had the power of godliness) yet the former sometimes persecute the latter to the Death. And it is just with God to punish His degenerate people by those that they are become like unto. And if we search the Records of former ages, we shall find, that an *eminent Persecution*, whether of the Church in general, or of the Churches in this or that particular Land, have seldome hapned, except great decayes as to Zeal, & the power of godliness amongst professors, have gone before it, and made way for it. The *British* Churches of old, retained the Name, and Form of Christianity, (just as some in these dayes, have the Name of *Protestants*) but they were, many of them, persecutors of those that had the power of godliness in their profession, and coversations, (as *Gildas* a faithful preacher of their own, Testifieth) therefore the Lord first plagued them by the *Picts*, (a sort of men not unlike our *Indians*) and after that, rooted them out of their own Land by those *Saxons*, & *Angles* which came out of *Germany*. Gildas de cid. Brita

Reas. 2. *The power, & malice of Satan, is another Ground of the persecution suffered by the Saints.* Satan hath an Hand in all those persecutions which are raised against the Church of God. In *Rev.* 2. 10. it is said, *The Divel shall cast some of you into prison.* If the people of God are cast into Prisons, for the Truths sake; It is the Divel that does it; whoever are

the Instruments. And therefore in *Rev.* 12. end, we read of *a Flood cast out of the mouth of the Dragon.* When floods of persecution arise, they come out of the Dragons Mouth. And there are especially two wayes, whereby Satan brings about his Design of persecuting the Churches of God.

1. *By Slandering of them.* He is called διάβολος (*i.e.* a Slanderer) in the Scriptures. He raises evil Reports; causeth this and that Evil to be believed, concerning the Lords servants: as if they were Seditious, and Rebellious, & what not? So 'twas said of *Jerusalem*, Ezra, 4. 15. *This City is a Rebellious City; & Hurtful to Kings, & they have of old time moved Sedition within the same.* Yea, so 'twas said of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ Himself, *Luc.* 23. 2. We have found this Man perverting the Nation, *& forbidding to give Tribute to Cæsar.* Or, as if they were Hereticks, and held blasphemous Opinions, *Acts*, 24. 14. *Stephen* was accused for speaking blasphemous words against *Moses*, and against God. *Acts*, 6. 11. In the Primitive Times, Christians were traduced, as if they did not wish well to the Emperours under whose Government they lived: yea, they were charged with most monstrous both Opinions and Practices: as we see by the writings of *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian*, and others; who were necessitated to publish Apologies for Christians, vindicating them from the malignant Slanders, which Satan and his Instruments had railed against them. They would put them into Bears skins, and then Dogs would devour them.

2. *By stirring up the Powers of the world against them.* The Divel, for the most part, (though not alwayes) hath the Powers of the world on his side. Hence we read of the *Power of the Enemy*, Luc. 10. 19. And when it is so, he causeth great persecutions. When wicked Men, and those that are bitter Enemies to the wayes, and servants of God, have great power in their Hands, this is as Satan would have it; & these he stirrs up to persecute. Where wicked Rulers are, Satan has his Throne. 'Twas said of *Pergamus*, Rev. 2, 13. *There*

is the Seat (or throne) *of Satan*: becauſe there was a wicked Ruler; a general Governour over that Province, who did reſide in the City of *Pergamus*; and was Satans chief Inſtrument in perſecuting the Saints. See *Rev.* 13. Its ſaid v. 2. *The Dragon gave the Beaſt his power, & his ſeat, & great authority*; and then, tis added, v. 7. *It was given to him to make war with the Saints.* If the Dragon gets power into the hands of the Beaſt, bloody perſecution is raiſed againſt the Church of God. And yet, neither Sin, nor Satan could cauſe the Church to be perſecuted, without another Reaſon: without the Lords permiſſion they could do nothing. Wherefore,

Reaſ. 3. *The Lord hath an holy hand, & glorious ends in all the Perſecutions which befall his people.* The Lord aims herein

1. *At the glory of His own Name*; which is his principal end. *Peter* was to die a Martyr: and tis ſaid, *Joh.* 21. 19. Chriſt ſignified to him *by what Death he ſhould glorifie God.* A man by Suffering, may poſſibly bring more glory to God in one hour; than by Doing never ſo much for Him all his life-time before. In this way, the Lord attains the propagation of his Church. The Church never thrives more than when (like a Vine) watered with its own blood. The more the *Egyptians* afflicted the *Iſraelites*; the more they multiplyed, and grew: *Exod.* 1. 12. The Borders of the Church were enlarged by the perſecution in my Text. It cauſed a Diſperſion of Chriſtians, and ſo an Increaſe of Chriſtianity; ſo that by this occaſion, the *Samaritanes*, & *Gentiles* came to have the Church of God among them. Some write, that a perſecution raiſed by the *Jews* againſt Chriſtians, cauſed *Joſeph* of *Arimathea*, and others to come over into *England* (then called *Britain*) by means whereof, the Goſpel, and Chriſtianity was firſt planted in the Land of our Forefathers ſepulchers. When the *Waldenſes* were perſecuted, ſome of them fled into *Picardy*; others into *Germany*: whence alſo the Doctrine of the Goſpel was ſpread abroad, & embraced in thoſe places. When the Papiſts raiſed a great perſecution againſt the *Bohemian*.

Uſher de Brit. Pr. P. 15. Fuller's of Brit. Mr. C Martyro 78, 134

Brethren, they grew in numbers; many of the Peers of the Land joyning with them. And when some of their Ministers were banished, they carried the Gospel into *Moravia*, and to the remotest parts of *Prussia*. The Church of God in *France* wonderfully increased, when above an hundred years agoe, they were persecuted, and miserably oppressed by Popish Adversaries. Though the Divel, and his Instruments design the Destruction of Christianity by persecution, yet the only wise God does outshoot him in his own Bow, and cause it to tend to the Inlargement thereof. The constancy, and patience of the Lords servants in their sufferings, does gain others over to the truth; perhaps, convert many thousands to the wayes of God. This made the Heathen in the primitive Times, cry out, *Verè Magnus est Deus Christianorum. Truly! Great is the God of the Christians.* Sometimes their cruel Executioners, have been thereby Converted. And because of this, a popish Adversary advised that no more Protestants might be burnd to death: for (said he) *The Smoke of such a Sufferer infected all it blew upon*; and made them Turn Protestants too.

2. *At the Trial of his servants.* The Lord Jesus said to *Smyrna*, Rev. 2. 10. *Behold! the Divel shall cast some of you into prison, that you may be Tryed: and ye shall have tribulation ten Dayes.* There was the persecution under *Trajan*, that lasted *ten Dayes*; *viz.* ten prophetical Dayes: *h. e.* ten years. And this was for the Trial of those Christians. Persecution is to try whether men will cleave to God, or no; to try the sincerity of their Faith, and Obedience; to try what Mettal they are made of: whether pure, or base: and whether they are Gold, or Dross. Grapes come not to the *proof*, until they come to the *press*. Alas! Many professors of Religion are like the Stony-ground hearers, *Mat.* 13. 21. that having no Root in themselves, endure but for a while: and when tribulation, or *Persecution ariseth because of the word, by & by they are Offended.* Persecution tryes who are such. When a

Dr. Burges's Ser. on Matth. 12.

Storm

Storm comes, withered leaves fall off: but green leaves abide. Even ſo ſincere Chriſtians will ſtand; but withered, unſound profeſſors fall away, when a Storm of perſecution blowes. For this Reaſon the Lord ſends perſecution on His Church, that ſo men may diſcern between the righteous and the wicked, between thoſe that truly *Fear* God, and thoſe that *Fear* him not.

3. The Lord hereby aymeth *At the Good of his people.* They are bettered as to their ſpiritual eſtates, by all thoſe ſufferings which in this world they are ſubject unto. God's children are like Starrs, that ſhine brighteſt in the darkeſt night; like Spices, that ſmell ſweeteſt when pounded. It is noted of the perſecution under *Antiochus*, Dan. 11. 35. It ſhould be *to Purge the Saints, & to make them White.* Their *temporal* loſſes are made up in *Spirituals.* Mar. 10. 29. 30 Whoever does leave or loſe any thing for my ſake (ſais Chriſt) *ſhall receive an Hundred fold now in this time with Perſecuton.* If perſecutors prevail ſo as to deprive them of their Eſtates, then god gives them ſpiritual Mercyes, that ſhall an Hundred fold make up their outward Miſeryes. Yea, at the laſt they are partakers of the greater glory in the higheſt Heaven for ever; becauſe of the perſecutions which they have endured. Their *light* afflictions work for them a *farr more exceeding*, and *eternal weight* of glory. 2 *Cor* 4. 7. See 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. There is indeed a ſpecial crown of glory, which the Lord hath prepared, and reſerved for them that ſuffer for His ſake, and are *Martyrs* in His Cauſe. It is ſaid to ſuch, *Great is your Reward in Heaven* Mat. 5. 12. Hence were the Chriſtians in the primitive times moſt deſirous to ſuffer Martyrdome. How did they e'en long to be expoſed to the utmoſt ſufferings: becauſe they knew there was a ſpecial crown of glory that ſuch ſufferers ſhould receive!

vid, Mr Martyr Epiſtle Reader.

4. The Lord in thoſe perſecutions which come upon his people, aymes *At the Ruine of His, & the Churches Enemies*; that way may be made for that. Perſecutors muſt prevail,

that they may be fit for the Destruction which the Lord has reserved them for. If we hear of great persecutions raging against the Church of God, 'tis a sign, and we may conclude that there is great Destruction, and Desolation on the Enemies of God's people, near at hand. Consider the Instance of *Pharaoh*: and see *Phil.* 1. 28. unto this purpose. It is an evident token that destruction from God is hastening upon those that Trouble his people. The sin of persecution has alwayes been a Fatal, Ruining sin to them that have bin guilty of it. The four great Monarchyes, to their cost, have found it so. Persecution has been the Ruine of the *Babylonian*; the Ruine of the *Persian*; and the Ruine of the *Grecian* Monarchy. This was the Ruine of *Rome* Heathen: *Rev.* 6. 9. & this will be the Ruine of *Rome*-Antichristian also: *Rev.* 18. 24. Yea, tis seldome seen that the Lord bears long with this Iniquity. And notorious persecutors seldome escape remarkeable strokes of the Judging-Hand of God upon them in this world: besides the Vengeance of Eternal Fire, in the world to come.

Good-Sermon. 105.

The Application of this Truth remains, Wherefore

Use. 1. *Let us be Exhorted to prepare for Times of Persecution.*

To awaken hereunto

Consider. 1. *What ground we have from the Scripture, to expect such Times as the Exhortation mentions.* It is evident from the Scriptures of Truth, that great persecutions against the Church of God, are at Hand. It is said, 2 *Tim.* 3. 1. *This know also, that in the last Dayes,* (& how much more then, in the last of the last Dayes?) *Perillous Times shall come:* Times perillous especially on account of the great persecutions that the Church of *God* shall then become subject to. Indeed we expect glorious Times for the Church of *God* on Earth: and we have ground from the Scripture so to do. But we have so much the more reason to expect great commotions in the world; yea, great, & dismal persecutions on the Church: For, relating to the *Revolutions* immediately preceding the

great

great glory promised to the Church upon Earth, it is said, *Numb.* 24. 23. *Alas! who shall Live when God doth these things?* It is the Lord's usual way to prepare his people for glorious Times, by great persecutions. What a distressing persecution was there, a little before the children of *Israel* were delivered out of *Egypt?* The greatest of the Ten persecutions: (that under *Diocletian*) was it not just before the Lord raised the Great *Constantine* to advance Christians in all places of the world. In order to the ascension of the Witnesses, there is first a most horrible slaughter of them. And we know what is said, *Rev.* 12. 12. *The Divel hath great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time.* It is so at this Day. Ere long, the Angel with the key of the bottomless Pit, & with a great chain in his hand, will come down from Heaven, and lay hold on the Dragon, that old serpent, which is the Divel, & Satan; and bind him, & cast him into the bottomless pit. Therefore the Divel hath great wrath; & Therefore the Church of God may expect great persecution. A dying Beast will bite cruelly: so is Antichrist, a dying Beast, His Day is comeing; his Time is well nigh expired: but, since he is going out of the world; we may expect that he will give a cruel Bite at the Church of God. Some of the Lord's Worthyes, have often spoken concerning *the last Conflict with Antichrist*, which will be indeed, *a short, but a sharp Trial.* That Learned, & Holy *Usher*, was, not long before his death exceeding confident, that the greatest persecution on the Protestant Churches, was yet to come.

Consider. 2. *What solemn Warnings the Lord hath given unto us, to prepare for Times of Persecution.*

God has given us Warning, by letting us know what bloody designs are on foot among the Antichristian Party against the whole Protestant Interest: A Design, the like whereunto has not been, since the Dayes of *Haman*. God has given us dreadful warning by Signs in Heaven: especially by that fearful Sight, & great Sign which we, & all the World saw

the last year blazing among the starrs of God. Such things have sometimes presaged great persecutions on the Church. There was a Comet went before *Nero*'s persecution: The *Arian* persecution likewise was preceded, & presaged by Blazing Starrs. God hath given us yet more solemn warning by what is already come upon the professors of the Truth in other parts of the world. There is a great persecution raised against the Churches of God, in diverse parts of *Europe*: especially, in the Kingdome of *France*: which hath occasioned our being thus before the Lord this day; and which, I cannot but look upon as one awful Consequent of that Portentous Blaze which was seen in the Heavens this time Twelvemoneth. Many thousands of French *Protestants* lose their Estates: Many thousands of them fly into other Lands; being forced to leave their own. And there is an Edict come forth concerning them, more bloody than what came from the Court of *Pharaoh*: *Pharaoh*'s Edict was to destroy onely the Bodyes of *Israelitish* Infants: But now there's an Edict that reacheth further: An Edict for the destruction of the Souls of the Children of Protestants. An Edict to make Idolaters of them. Behold! Our Neighbours House is on Fire! It behoves us to look about us! The Protestants in *France*, were once (*viz.* in the Dayes of their King *Henry* IV.) as unlikely to be oppressed by their enemies, as we are. Yea, in the judgement of man, it was supposed no Power could wrest their Liberryes from them. Many of their greatest Nobility were on their side. They had great Armies and brave Commanders to stand up for them. They had above two hundred walled Towns in their possession, for their safety, & security. But trusting too much to an Arm of flesh they soon lost all, and lay at the mercy of their Enemies. We have no reason then, meerly because we are *Protestants*, and have the Truth with us, to think that we shall not feel the Cross, as well as our Brethren in the world have done. We have escaped it a great while. Our Land hath had rest above

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for-

forty years: It is therefore Time for us to think of, and prepare for ſufferings. Our predeceſſors, the Auntient *Britans*, living in a remote corner of the world, felt little or nothing of thoſe general perſecutions, which other Chriſtians bled under. Nevertheleſs, the laſt of the primitive perſecutions, fell heavily upon them. And whether the laſt of Antichriſt's *Perſecutions*, will not reach both *Englands*, the Lord God knoweth. It will be wiſedome for us all to prepare for it. In *England's* peace, we ſhall have peace. That there are ſpecial Deſigns againſt the Proteſtant Intereſt there, we are all aſſured. Neither are we ignorant how awfully God has threatened us with Changes among our ſelves; as if He would pluck up our Hedge: and then the wild Boar would ſoon break in upon this Vine. If the Lord ſhould be provoked to bring a Change upon us as to our Civil State: If that wall of Government, which hath hitherto been ſuch a mercy to this people, ſhould be removed; there are three Evils, that would quickly follow, *viz. Superſtition, Prophaneneſs*, and *Perſecution*. If the raines of Government ſhould fall into Hands that are enemies to the wayes of Chriſt, we can in reaſon expect no better.

Conſider. 3. *What Sins there are among us that call for ſuch a ſcourge as this.* Thoſe very ſins that are wont to be the Forerunners of perſecution, are to be found in the midſt of thee, O *N-England*. I ſhall not inlarge, but is there not a great decay of Firſt-love? See *Rev.* 2. 4, 5. *Thou haſt left thy firſt Love.* What follows? *I will come quickly, & remove thy Candleſtick out of its place.* How was the *Epheſian* Candleſtick removed, but by a ſtorm of perſecution, which blew it down? This is the Iſſue of leaving Firſt-love! And have not we done ſo? It is indeed ſeldome known that an Apoſtatizing people are brought home to God, but in ſuch a way as this. We may then fear it, eſpecially conſidering that other means have not prevailed unto our Reformation. Are there not Contentions? Have not we been like fooliſh little Birds,

Pecking at one another, until the great Kite be ready to come, and devour one as well as another? Of late God hath let loose *Indian Wolves* upon us; in part, for this very sin, no doubt. And what further He may do unto us, is known unto himself. Is there not *Formality*? Oh! what *Formality*! I remember 'tis observed, that a little before the great *Parisian* Massacre in *France*, wherein thirty thousand Protestants perished, there was a great Decay of the power of godliness among them: *Formality* was grown upon them. Notwithstanding the extream dangers attending them, there was little earnest seeking unto God: but their minds were taken with worldly matters; the great concernments of Eternity in the mean time neglected. Oh that it were not too much so, with the generality of Christians amongst us! We have then cause to fear, and to be awakened.

But what shall we do, that we may be prepared for suffering Times?

I would say but two words by way of Direction. Labour for true *Faith*, and for Assurance, and you'll be Well prepared for the greatest sufferings.

1. *Labour for Syncerity*. O let us look to that, that we are built upon a right foundation; and then the House will Stand though the *Floods* come against it. Yea, though never such winds, and waves, & floods of Temptation, and Persecution should arise; He that is by a true *Faith* built upon Christ, after all is done, shall stand. I know it is a Thought, that often times cometh into the heart of a child of God, If suffring Times should come, shall I be able to hold out? If my profession should cost me the loss of all that's dear to me in this world, what then should I Doe? And it is good for Christians, to maintain an holy Jealousy over their own hearts. Self-jealous Mr. *Saunders*, endured the fire; and died a Martyr at the Stake: when Self-confident Dr. *Pendleton* turned Papist, and served the Times, to avoid persecution. But this is the way, to be sure to hold out, Come Life, come

Death

Death) even to be ſincere in the Lord's ſight; To believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt with *faith unfeigned*. All the gates of Hell, all the perſecutors on Earth, in conjunction with all the powers of Darkneſs, ſhall never finally prevail againſt any true Believer. Mockings, Scourgings, Bonds, Rackings, Tortures, the worſt that Satan, and his bloody perſecuting children can deviſe, will be endured, rather than Sin will be committed, or the Truth denied, where there is true Faith. *Heb.* 11. 35, 36, 37. For Faith maketh a man couragious, and willing to venture himſelf in the Cauſe of Chriſt. It maketh him to fear God more than men. The ſincere Believer will ſay, as ſometimes that great *Confeſſor* told his perſecutors, *You may pluck my Heart out of my body: but you ſhall never pluck the Truth out of my Heart.*

2. *Labour for Aſſurance.* In the Primitive Times, Aſſurance was not ſo rare a thing among Chriſtians, as now it is: for thoſe were ſuffering Times; and believers did need Aſſurance; that ſo they might be, at a Minutes warning, ready to be called forth to die, and to ſuffer for the Truth. If a man be called to part with his Eſtate; and he has no aſſurance of that which is better: how ſad, and miſerable will he be? When otherwiſe, he might be as joyful as they in *Heb.* 10. 34. Where there is Sincerity, there will be *conſtancy* in ſufferings: but Aſſurance is neceſſary, in order unto *comfort* in ſufferings. It will tend much to the honour of Chriſt, when his ſervants are exceeding Joyful in all their Tribulation: For which cauſe, He doth ſometimes beſtow the grace of Aſſurance upon them at the Time when they are called to ſuffer for his Name; though before that, they had it not. One of our *Engliſh* Martyrs, that ſuffered in thoſe Dayes when Popery ſat in the Throne, as He was going to burn & die at the Stake, cryed out in an Extaſy of Joy, *O the Comforter is come, He is come, He is come into my ſoul.* O then Labour for this Grace. They that *know in themſelves*, that they ſhall be *rewarded* in Heaven, if they be *perſecuted* on

Earth, will not be much troubled, though they be deprived of their Estates, Liberties, Lives, & All, in the Cause of Christ or for the Gospel's sake.

Use. 2. *Let us endeavour to Prevent this evil which I have been discoursing of.*

For although it be true as hath been said, If persecution do come, the event of it will, by the overruling Hand of divine providence, be good; God will have glory, the Church will have spiritual advantage: yet it is not, in it self, a thing to be desired; but to be greatly deprecated. Wo to them that desire the evil Day: that Day is dark, and not light. When a storm of Persecution comes, what woful Desolations come therewith! How many Churches are thereby laid most desolate! How many Lives are lost therein! especially of the Ministers of God; and most of all, of those that are most faithful, able, and useful. Look for that! If a storm of persecution blow over into *America*, Some Ministers of God whom you now hear preaching, will be made a Sacrifice: A sacrifice to confirm the Faith of this His people. The Lord Jesus hath placed them in the forefront of the hottest battel. And such of them as are most dear to Christ, shall be singled out to be his *Champions*, and to lose their lives in his Cause.

But what shall we do, that this Evil may be Prevented?

I Answer.

1. *Let us be Humbled for those sins that might provoke God to let loose Persecutors upon us.* Some may think, the best way would be, to comply with the Adversary: But I am sure This is a better way, even to be Humbled for our sins. The wise man saies, *When a mans ways please the Lord, his Enemies shall be at Peace with him.* Prov. 16. 7. O Let us be Humbled for the sins already mentioned: For that *Apostasy*, for those *Divisions*, for that *Formality*, & *Lukewarmness* in Religion, which is too general among us. And let us be Humbled for one sin more. That is, *Our great Unthankfulness for*

our precious Libertyes. Never any people in the world, had greater cause of Thankfulness unto God, than we have had. In respect of our *Civil* Libertyes; wherein we have been admirably priviledged; and which God has to a wonderment, continued to us. *And* in respect of our *Spiritual* Libertyes; The Libertyes of the Gospel of Christ, and of the House of God; which we have been blessed with. *But* certainly, we have not been so Thankful, as we ought to be: O be Humbled for this!

2. *Let us Pitty, & Pray for the Lord's suffering servants.* To pray for the peace of Jerusalem, is the way to prosper. *Psal.* 122. 6. To be grieved for the *Afflictions* of Joseph, *Amos*, 6. 6. is the way to prevent the like sufferings from coming upon our selves. The Lord give us much of that publick spirit. *Perhaps* carnal Reason will say, It is not good to be so open in espousing a suffering Cause: we had better be more private. *But Moses*, who vvas a vvise Man, vvas of another mind: *Choosing Rather to suffer affliction with the people of God.* Heb. 11. 25. And let us give the world to see, & know that we are not ashamed to own His suffering saints. Let us remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being our selves also in the body. So that if Enquiry be made of those that are going from us, to other parts of the world, What are they doing in *New England*? The Reply may be, They are Fasting, & praying for the persecuted people of God in the world I say, if any ask of you, What are they doing in *New-England*, Tell them, that in *New England*, they did no sooner hear of the persecuted Condition of the *Protestants in France*, but they set themselves, to Fast, & Pray to the God of Heaven, for them. We shall not repent of what we have done; when God appears to take Vengeance on the Enemy. If we sympathise with the Lord's people in their present sufferings, and sorrows; In the Day when Jerusalem shall Rejoice; we shall be glad, and rejoice with Her: Even in that

Day, which is not farr off; when the Lord will be Jealous for Jerusalem, and for Zion, with a great Jealousy.

Tibi Domine.

ERRATA.

Pag. 11. *L.* 19. for (have) Read (hath)
P. 15. *L.* 24. Read 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. & 1 *Pet.* 1. 7.

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There is intended shortly to be Published, a Treatise of this Authors, about the Duty of *PRAYER*, also concerning the *SACRAMENTS* of the New-Testament; & several other Subjects.